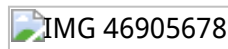


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USM SCHOOL OF DENTAL SCIENCES FOUNDING DEAN MAKES HIS MARK AT UAE



PENANG, 14 February 2016 – Portraying the ever-smiling face and also being of humble character, the founding dean of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) School of Dental Sciences (PPSG), Professor Dato' Dr. Ab. Rani Samsudin, 57, now holds the post of Director of the Dental Hospital at the University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Sharing his experience in establishing the USM PPCG, he said, working closely together with his academic partners at the USM Kubang Kerian Health Campus has led to the successful establishment of PPCG in 1998.

"We took in 38 pioneer students in 1999 for the Bachelor of Dental Surgery programme, where all of them successfully completed their studies later and graduated in 2006," he said when met after attending a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony between USM and Meichen Quanmin (Shandong) Hospital Investment Co. Ltd. (MEICHEN), China.

He further explained that the number of students has increased from year to year and PPCG has explored the field of research and managed to build research laboratories, as well as expanding the community-based dental services in Kelantan.

Migrating to UAE in 2007 has opened a new chapter in his life, when he was offered to establish the Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Sharjah located there.

"At that moment, I faced a major challenge as the university did not have a School of Medical Sciences and the university wanted to establish a Faculty of Dentistry, whereas Medical Sciences need to serve as its foundation," he said.

However, for Ab. Rani, he managed to overcome every challenge, based on his experience in establishing a dental faculty at USM. He managed to establish policies and curriculum that were based on the School of Health Sciences curriculum in Australia at that time.

"The challenge faced at UAE was that as the country was still new in the health sector, there were still many policies which have yet to be established, which required forging a close relationship with the public sector such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Higher Education.

"I needed to take a closer look into the direction of the country in both the fields and the aspiration of the country to develop the health sector.

"In my 10 years there, I realised that money is not the main deciding factor in establishing a good research, but it is how one's talent is assessed by becoming a successful person and thus building a perfect life," said Ab. Rani who now serves as a Visiting Professor at USM PPSG.

He will spend three months each year at PPSG USM to guide the students of Dental Sciences and also in supervising the postgraduate students.

"When I was in UAE, I realised that the talent that I have was still not good enough and I have to work harder because I have seen the level of excellence at the international level. That is why I always keep in touch with PPSG and always advise the students at PPSG to make a mark at the international stage," said the father of three children.

He added that the field of dentistry in this country is among the best and most advanced in the world. It is down to the efforts of the Ministry of Health in providing good services to the community, as well as the local universities in producing highly-competent dentists.

"My advice to the students is that we must study diligently and be the best because the university is a place to seek knowledge, and upon graduation we move into the next phase of life where we seek opportunities and develop expertise in order to compete globally," said Ab. Rani.

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